

Caring for the Earth

Caring for the Earth The Worcester Diocesan Environmental Strategy



FOREWORD

Why should Christians care about the environment? It's partly because, in common with everyone else, they should care about the state of the planet their children and grandchildren will inherit. It's partly because they take seriously the command God gives to humanity in the first Chapter of Genesis to be stewards of creation. The most important reason, though, should be that God cares.



When the Chief Rabbi spoke to assembled bishops at the Lambeth Conference in 2008 he pointed out that the first covenant that God makes in the Bible is in Genesis 9 and that this covenant is not just with humanity. It is with all life on earth. Five times in the chapter God insists that the covenant he is making is with all life on earth.

The integrity of the created order is crucial to the first covenant in the Bible. It is at the heart of the new covenant, too. God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son' (John 3.16). Too often that verse is interpreted to mean just humanity.

God loves the world and the entirety of his creation but that creation is in our hands. God promised Noah that he would never again destroy the world but he cannot promise that we will never destroy the world because he has given us free will.

The stakes are very high indeed as far as that free will is concerned and that is why this document and what will emerge from it are so important. Climate change is central to its concerns but they go much wider: the marine environment is under serious threat and there are grave worries about resource depletion and dependence on oil. This strategy document, while giving high priority to actions that reduce green house gas emissions, also deals with a range of other very significant environmental concerns including land management and biodiversity, sustainable food supplies and fair trade, minimising waste and recycling.

There are good examples around the diocese of sterling efforts being made to reduce our carbon footprint and I am delighted to be Bishop of a diocese which is fully committed to care for the earth. In the light of the latter, this document deserves our very serious attention – for the sake of the planet, for the sake of our children and grandchildren but most of all for God's sake.

+John

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

The Environmental Strategy adopted by Diocesan Synod in March 2008 identified objectives under six major themes and also three cross-cutting themes relevant to all our activities - Theology & Liturgy, Communication & Education and how we measure our progress.

THEMES

Land	Food	Energy	Design, Construction & Development	Waste & Water	Transport
Leading by example with our land	Eating in a fair and sustainable way	Minimising the impact of our energy use on our Environment, today and tomorrow	Leading by example with our buildings	Minimising our waste and water use and re-using what we can	Minimising the impact of our travel on our Environment, today and tomorrow

Theology and Liturgy: Achieving our goal in a Christian context

Communication & Education: Informing practical steps for parishes and people

Measuring our Progress: Understanding where we are now and in the future

This document expands the original strategy to include the actions needed to make sure the objectives are realised. Many of the actions come from suggestions made when the strategy was discussed in Diocesan Synod.

There is a broad scientific and political consensus that average global temperatures will continue to rise this century but, by reducing greenhouse gas emissions, the increases could be limited to a more manageable level. Climate change poses significant challenges - for the Church, for the international community but particularly for people in developing countries. Environmental degradation, particularly in the marine environment, and resource depletion also pose global challenges that will have to be faced soon if God's creation is to be safeguarded.

This strategy recognises the Church can have a prophetic and visionary role in a society that has to find ways to mitigate against environmental degradation and climate change or adapt to it. The challenges we face require a response from everyone. Lifestyle change coupled with community involvement could turn the Church and its members into agents of change and transformation.

Explanatory Note: Mitigation means identifying and taking actions to reduce the impact of our consumption based lifestyles - our contribution to climate change and environmental pollution. Adaptation means how we humans, and all other animal and plant species, will actually live with the consequences of climate change and environmental degradation.

2.0 GOAL

This strategy is much more than any standard corporate environmental strategy. Care for the earth is founded upon a relationship between Creator and created. We need to address the environmental and climate change challenges through our mission and teaching. The primary goal is:

“To encourage and enable churches and church people in this diocese to develop visionary and prophetic ways of celebrating and safeguarding God’s creation.”

One of the major steps is to cut the church's carbon emissions dramatically. The Church of England's national target is an 80% reduction between 2005 and 2050. To achieve this we will need to aim for a reduction of at least 20% in the first ten years.

Glossary of abbreviations

CARL	The Chaplaincy for Agricultural & Rural Life
DAC	The Diocesan Advisory Committee for the Care of Churches
DBF	The Worcester Diocesan Board of Finance Ltd
DCO	Diocesan Communications Officer
ECO Group	The Diocesan Environmental Challenge & Oversight Group - this group reports to the Bishop's Council
HEFF	Heart of England Fine Foods
I&G	The Diocesan Investment & Glebe Committee
LA	local authority i.e. council
PCC	Parochial Church Council
WDTG	World Development Task Group - reports to the Diocesan Board for Mission

3.0 OUR THEMES, OBJECTIVES AND ACTIONS

For each theme there are supporting objectives. These then have a range of actions which aim to show who can do what, by when.

3.1 LAND

The Church of England is a major landowner with over 48,000 hectares in rural areas alone.

Within this diocese we have nearly 1600 hectares of Glebe and other land. This is spread across 185 farming tenants with tenancy agreements we let and indirectly manage.

Many of our churchyards are very ancient, some Yew Trees providing evidence that they were pagan sites pre-dating even our earliest churches. Some of these churchyards represent the best examples of semi-natural grassland we have in the country, being rich in plant and animal species (or biodiversity).

How we manage them impacts on that biodiversity. Management for biodiversity is not always in line with public concern as anyone who has tried to move to a hay meadow cutting regime in their churchyard will appreciate.

Churchyards are an important part of the green infrastructure of our increasingly urban environment, acting as green lungs. Churchyards will act as important green stepping stones in the future as species migrate and adapt to live with the consequences of increased temperatures and climate change.

Theme	LAND: leading by example with our land		
Objective	Biodiversity: to maximise the contribution of our churchyards to local biodiversity	Who	Timescale
	Consider initiatives such as Living Churchyards and Caring for God's Acre www.caringforgodsacre.org.uk/	ECO group	During next 18 months
	Help parishes and visitors understanding of why there is a conservation area - communication/education - burial leaflets, sensory gardens, seasonal gardens of remembrance.	ECO group, DAC, PCCs	During next 18 months
	Provide for wildlife and climate change adaptation	PCCs	Consider during 12 months following
	Encourage areas of beauty - make it used - schools, community resource - area for people to be	PCCs, DAC link to Quiet Gardens Movement	Consider during 12 months following
Objective	Land management: to manage Church owned land, including Glebe, to the best environmental and sustainable standards.		
	To review, in conjunction with Land Agents, tenancy agreements at letting/re-letting stage to maximise/incentivise environmental and sustainable practices (e.g. Environmental Stewardship). Promote this to existing and new tenants.	I&G with Glebe agent	When tenancies are up for negotiation
	Secure and model more active management through more proactive advice, briefing tenants about good husbandry	ECO group to consider with I&G.	During next 12 months

	Who	Timescale
Investigate the potential for growing Energy crops on some glebe land sites.	ECO group to consider with I&G.	During next 12 months
Ensure that land and property sold for development achieves development of the highest environmental standards, in part by informing local planning authorities of our strategy	I&G, Parsonages, PCCs	When sales are negotiated
Land Share scheme to be further investigated (http://landshare.channel4.com/) – allotments or shared gardening suggested for parsonage house gardens	ECO group to consider	During next 12 months

Examples of what can be done

Henry Wormington farms land owned by the church. Together with his wife he is a driving force behind Worcestershire's Farmers' markets which provides high quality food and fair prices for producers. He manages his land with a concern for the environment. A mixture of cut and uncut hedges gives both an abundance of berries for the birds to eat and a safe habitat. The land is of interest archeologically as it was drag-line ploughed during the war years and the ridges are still in evidence. Conserving these features enables Henry to be part of Defra's "Entry Level Scheme" which gives a much needed boost to the farm's income.



Churchyards can be managed to provide rich habitats for plant and animal life

3.2 FOOD

Ten million tonnes of carbon dioxide are emitted in the UK getting our food to us each year. We can buy Strawberries every month of the year, some of them coming with a massive carbon footprint. Food packaging is an issue. It accounts for 35% of plastics used.

Theme	FOOD: eating in a fair and sustainable way		
Objective	Fair Trade: to encourage fair trade, recognising both local and international issues	Who	Timescale
	Prepare a plan to achieve a “fair trade” diocese	World Development Task Group	Current work, completion in next 12 months.
Identify best practice; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • lead the promotion of local and seasonal produce. • Education about food portions • Encouraging people to highlight issues of availability of local produce 		ECO group, CARL, think about working with http://lovebritishfood.co.uk/ HEFF, Worcestershire Farmers Markets	
	Use Fairtrade, Food that is local, seasonable and fair, at churches/meals	PCCs	
	Harvest festival linked to local produce	PCCs & CARL to encourage/resource	
	Churches to develop links with farmers’ markets and support local produce festivals	PCCs & CARL to encourage/resource	
	Church allotments	PCCs. I&G to review glebe land for allotments	18 months
Objective	Sustainable Supplies: to develop and lead practices which recognise the importance of sustainable food production, packaging and transport		
	Unpack our catering practices - avoid excess packaging, undiscerning purchasing. Establish a suggested protocol for church catering. Ethics of Bring & Share if there are surpluses/waste. Information for churches about sources of local food; a good practice booklet on planning a church event with food and drink “How to cook for 100 with one (outside) cold tap”	ECO group	
	Event to look at food issues from ethical, environmental and development perspective	ECO & Carl & WDTG	2011

Examples of what can be done

Stourbridge Fairtrade Group takes Fairtrade to “Fun in the Park” on a wet Bank Holiday Monday. The group has grown out of Churches Together in Stourbridge and is working to make Stourbridge a Fairtrade Town. Over the last few years group members have run Fairtrade stalls in local churches, colleges, in the High Street at Carnival, Harvest and Christmas and, until recently, in the local Farmers Market.



Teme Valley Market is held on the second Sunday of every month at the Talbot, Knightwick. It brings together a wide range of local producers. The market has recently celebrated its 10th anniversary and is a great success for producers and consumers.



Jean Clift, one of the driving forces behind the market, sings in the choir in her local church. She says that she spends three Sundays a month serving God and one Sunday serving mammon! But God is not absent from the Market. Not only is He concerned with building up fair relationships between producers and consumers but also the church has a visible presence. There is a short act of worship as part of the market to celebrate Plough Sunday and Harvest. In November there is an act of remembrance. December's market includes Christmas carols.

3.3 ENERGY

In the UK, heating, lighting and powering our homes produces 27% of the country's carbon dioxide emissions.

Before we look at big expensive solutions it's worth remembering the words of the Bishop of London who when launching "Shrinking the Footprint" (www.shrinkingthefootprint.cofe.anglican.org/) said that the most simple, but important, steps were to change to low energy light bulbs and fit draught excluders around the church. Some of you will also know how challenging those simple steps can be! It's very simple to switch to a green electricity supplier who uses renewable sources for power generation. However, it's not necessarily cheaper. That's one example of one of the many conflicting issues common to the climate change challenge; but one we need a view on. We have a challenge around matching our liturgy and practice to economic realities, not unfamiliar territory for the Church, but one which calls for visionary and prophetic behaviour as described in the strategy goal.

Theme	ENERGY: Minimising the impact of our energy use on our environment, today and tomorrow		
Objective	Heating & Ventilation: to minimise the use of energy in sources and systems and, where possible, use sustainable approaches to these	Who	Timescale
	Prioritise energy efficiency by formulating policies on boiler controls and other energy using equipment	DAC	By 2010
	Define a policy on differentiated energy costs for provided housing	Diocesan Surveyor	By 2010
	Install three ground-source heat pumps for parsonage houses	Diocesan Surveyor	By 2012
	Reduce energy use through insulation and draught-proofing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Old Palace • Parsonages • Church premises (Target 20% of buildings) 	Diocesan Secretary Diocesan Surveyor PCCs	2010-2014 By 2010 2010-2014
	Only heat particular areas for particular uses – e.g. Lady Chapel for weekday services	PCCs	
	Be more efficient in use of existing heating equipment e.g. timers, thermostats, etc	PCC, Old Palace Office Manager	2010
	Provide information on costs of alternative heating sources to Churches and congregations.	DAC Adviser, ECO	Every 2 years
Objective	Lighting: to implement the most energy efficient lighting solutions		
	Prioritise energy efficiency by formulating policies on lighting in churches.	DAC	By 2010
	Eradicate use of tungsten bulbs in church premises	PCCs	By 2014
	Establish low energy bulb libraries and state savings possible (running costs and CO ₂ emissions)	DAC, ECO	2010
	Buy light bulbs on offer and give free to members of congregations in support of Christian messages	PCCs,	By 2014
	Floodlighting - review number of days and purpose of lighting - look at more energy efficient systems.	PCC	2010

Objective	Green Energy: Actively promote a range of green electrical and alternative energy sources.	Who	Timescale
10 % of church premises using green electricity		PCCs	By 2011
20% of church premises using green electricity		PCCs	By 2014
Promote green electricity and encourage individuals to change		ECO, Diocesan Communications Officer	Every 2 years
Quinquennial inspection reports to cover energy performance and state what changes should be made		DAC	From mid 2010

Examples of what can be done



The diocesan offices now get their electricity from a supplier using 100% renewable sources. Before making the switch assess your energy use and look for ways to become energy efficient.



Changing the light bulbs can cut your bills as well as your CO₂ emissions. The Church Purchasing Scheme www.cpsonline.co.uk offers a reasonable range



Programmable room thermostats let you set different temperatures for different times of day. Dropping the temperature setting by just 1^o Celcius can save as much as 10%

3.4 DESIGN, CONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT

The Church's buildings (churches, halls, houses and offices) are significant but costly assets and a major contributor to our carbon footprint. Environmental issues must always be at the forefront of our planning, especially in the case of new works or new builds. Some of the things to consider are found in the earlier Energy Section.

For our existing places of worship, the accepted criteria for residential and commercial buildings are difficult to apply, especially on listed heritage buildings. However, the Diocesan Advisory Committee can advise on what steps might be worthwhile and appropriate.

Informed design includes considering sustainability and an environmental audit is a desirable step in producing proposals for change. Discussions with architects, consultants and contractors should give environmental issues due prominence.

Many vicarages have recently had their insulation and glazing upgraded to reduce energy usage and their heating systems upgraded to improve efficiency. The design of new vicarages and house extensions will not only include features to reduce the amount of carbon dioxide produced when they are used but also the quantities of carbon dioxide emitted in producing the materials of which they are made

Theme	DESIGN, CONSTRUCTION & DEVELOPMENT: Leading by example with our buildings		
Objective	Design and development: to design buildings which minimise carbon impact and improve buildings to use less energy	Who	Timescale
Consider the possibility of district heating where house, church and parish hall are close to each other, (heating system for a church complex e.g hall, church, house). This could involve the use of bio-mass or other energy production unit where mass is critical	DAC, PCC and Diocesan Surveyor	In next 2 years	
Most effective way of using churches whilst reducing environmental impact Heritage of world more important than heritage of church Save water from church roofs for watering church yards and flushing water for toilets. Encourage consultants to DAC to look at provision of tanks etc. differently Education of parishes to consider environmental issues when designing extension, alteration, lights, heating	DAC and PCC	In place now	
Insulation of existing buildings to be encouraged. Part of DAC design requirement and current parsonages policy.	DAC and Diocesan Surveyor	In place now	
The provision of solar panels and other renewable energy sources to new and existing buildings	DAC, PCC and Diocesan Surveyor	As funds permit from now	

		Who	Timescale
The renewal of existing heating plant to enable more efficient heating systems to be provided as a matter of environmental policy.		DAC, PCC and Diocesan Surveyor	As funds permit from now
The renewal of existing windows with double glazing. The provision of draught exclusion measures and secondary glazing where new frames cannot be installed.		Diocesan Surveyor	Now
The renewal of light fittings or just lamps with low wattage emitters as policy as well as part of other work.		Diocesan Surveyor DAC PCC	Now
The provision of bio-mass heating plant		PCC and Diocesan Surveyor	From now
There may be a need to consider special levels of investment for those clergy houses where replacement or “standard” upgrading is not viable.		DBF	TBA
Objective	Materials from sustainable sources: to maximise the use of sustainable and environmentally responsible materials within the design, construction and development of Parish and DBF properties	DAC and Diocesan Surveyor	In place now
Objective	Planning and Permissions: to revise existing policies, permissions and procedures to enable and positively support all Environmental Strategy objectives.	DAC and Diocesan Surveyor	In place now

Examples of what can be done

Solar panels on vicarages, like this one at Amblecote., help to provide hot water and reduce reliance on fossil fuels.



An ongoing process of monitoring and evaluating energy saving measures as they become available is being undertaken. In addition, the priorities in respect of how the funds that are available for maintaining and improving the houses are spent are constantly reassessed, taking into consideration those houses with the heaviest fuel bills and those where significant carbon savings can be made with the lowest financial cost.

An extension to the Archdeacon of Worcester's house shows on a small scale what is planned for new vicarages. The picture shows the incorporation of a high level of insulation.



3.5 WASTE AND WATER

One hundred million tonnes of waste is sent to landfill each year and the space for this is set to run out in five years. 40% of household waste can be composted at home, saving 20% of the UK's methane emissions. One tonne of recycled paper, or 100 bin bags, saves 17 trees, 17,000 gallons of water and enough energy to heat the average home for 6 months.

Our Cathedral has almost 1 acre of roof area. That collects 700,000 gallons of water a year, enough for 2000 toilet flushes every day of the year. It's the same amount of water that would keep 61 people supplied with water for a year in the UK, or 950 people in Ethiopia.

Theme	WASTE & WATER: Minimising our waste and water use and re-using what we can		
Objective	Minimising Waste: To identify and promote practices that minimise or avoid waste generation	Who	Timescale
	Link in with local authority domestic waste and recycling programme which requires sorting waste	Diocesan Office & Each church/parish	2010
	Reduce paper use . Audit use for services, handouts and committee papers and set 30% reduction target through reduction of bespoke service sheets, use of overhead projection where appropriate, return to hymn books, or reusable service frameworks. Encourage use of parish web site for committee papers	Diocesan services PCC initiated	2010
	Parish self assessment sheet, to encourage parishes to examine or establish recycling policy	ECO group	2010
	Church buildings such as Halls adopt clear policies for hire groups in waste reduction and recycling	PCCs	2010
	Church Schools continue their efforts to recycle , reduce waste and engage in local authority collection.	Dept of Children Youth and Education	2010
Objective	Recycling and Re-using: To identify and promote the best available practices for the re-cycling/re-using of organic and inorganic wastes		
	Make all relevant groups aware of recycling opportunities by working in partnership with local authorities. Encourage composting with shredding of paper etc	ECO group/LA partnership	ongoing
	Encourage churches to continue second hand sale for fund raising. White Elephants are good!	Communications Officer for Diocesan News	2010

Objective	Responsible Water Use To identify and promote the best available practices for responsible use and re-use of water	Who	Timescale
Water collection butts on Old Palace and appropriate churches for collection of water for e.g. garden watering		PCCs & Diocesan Sec	2010-2012
Regular monitoring of church plant water use through meters, and measures taken to reduce. E.g. Bricks in toilet cistern, sprays on taps etc		PCCs & Diocesan Sec	2010 annual
For new builds and improvements on kitchens and toilets, to establish best practice in water use and harvesting		Diocesan Surveyor DAC	2010
Car parking and hard areas around churches and church buildings to have soak away systems to avoid run off water going into drains leading to potential flooding.		Advice for diocese to PCcs	2010 ongoing

Examples of what can be done

The cathedral has locked into the City Council's recycling and waste collection following legislation which allows places of worship to be included in domestic collections. Green bins for recyclable material are located alongside black for waste. Numbers of bins have been reduced and a recycling area for all materials is planned.



Diocesan Meetings & Events	Who	Timescale
<p>Trying to locate meetings where public transport is available. Use coaches for big events – The Diocesan Assembly was a good example.</p> <p>Explore having fewer meetings</p> <p>Telephone conferencing could be a quick win – some facilities built into Old Palace system. Conference calls would be a good substitute for continuing meetings where groups have previously met face to face.</p> <p>Wider use of teleconferencing to be considered (spider phone system/using conference call provider) - perhaps set up spider phone system in 3 locations in diocese.</p>	<p>Diocesan Officers</p> <p>Diocesan Secretary</p>	<p>Immediate</p> <p>2010 to 2012 triennium</p>
<p>Pastoral Reorganisations</p> <p>In pastoral reorganisations and building development proposals to consider transport availability and impact, recognising that issues of pastoral and mission “reach” will have priority, but within that to evaluate options for minimising the carbon footprint:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ location of clergy houses ○ location of parish / team offices ○ congregational travel and patterns of services (but also consider that, e.g. heating and lighting likely to have greater effect than travel) 	<p>Archdeacons & Diocesan Surveyor</p>	<p>ongoing</p>
<p>Deanery Synods & PCCs etc</p> <p>The ECO Group, with the Diocesan Communications Officer, will bring forward proposals. Ideas suggested for evaluation include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Where there are options, make events accessible to public transport. ○ Volunteers & parishioners travel plan - car sharing ○ Car parks at churches. 	<p>ECO Group & DCO</p>	<p>mid 2010</p>
<p>Clergy & Parishioners</p> <p>The ECO Group, with the Diocesan Communications Officer, will bring forward proposals. Ideas suggested for evaluation include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ provide travel information space on church premises ○ possibility of church car parks for weekday park and ride ○ ensure bicycle travel rate is adequately publicised. <p>possibility of providing opportunity to experience electric bikes - salary sacrifice schemes - possibility of setting up demonstrations for larger group (e.g. at a clergy meeting or diocesan synod) A salary sacrifice scheme for (electric) bikes is not viable for clergy but low interest loans might be.</p>	<p>ECO Group & DCO</p>	<p>mid 2010</p>

Objective	Carbon Offsetting: To offset the carbon impact of our travel.	Who	Timescale
	Carbon offsetting provides an incentive for change. A commitment to buying offsets to mitigate greenhouse gas emissions, personal or church, provides a financial incentive to think about whether the journey or energy use could be avoided. Offsets are usually achieved by financial support of projects that reduce the emission of greenhouse gases.		
	<p>Local & Personal Initiatives</p> <p>The ECO Group has yet to recommend a particular offset scheme but, with the Diocesan Communications Officer, will bring forward proposals. Ideas suggested for evaluation include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Using offsetting educatively. ○ It would be possible for each household to set up their own offset scheme to use offset amounts to fund energy efficiency purchases. ○ Create fund and let parishioners use it on a voluntary basis ○ A local scheme might using money for something quite specific like boiler controls to start with, be used for all church travel to meetings (other than by public transport). 	ECO Group & DCO	mid 2010
	<p>Climate Justice Fund www.climatejusticefund.org</p> <p>The use of a carbon calculator by this web based resource makes it look like an offsetting scheme but those who consider using it need to know that it does nothing to reduce carbon emissions. The carbon calculation for this Church of England fund is used to suggest how much <i>compensation</i> individuals and parishes should pay for emissions over their fair share. The money is used for projects in various parts of the Anglican Communion to help some of the people expected to be hit hardest by climate change.</p>		available now

Examples of what can be done

Cycle or walk when possible



Try to use public transport for some journeys
For journey planning use



≠ For rail timetable and fares information
call National Rail Enquiries on
08457 48 49 50

When visiting the Old Palace consider using the park & ride facilities rather than bringing a car into the city centre



3.7 THEOLOGY & LITURGY

Theological Reflection: The starting point of this strategy is that we are all **creatures** living in relationship with our Creator. That influences our relationship not only with our fellow living creatures, but with everything that is created, visible and invisible.

This may seem an obvious statement, but often the Christian relationship with our environment has started not with our **belonging** to creation so much as being **stewards** of it, and sometimes making a subtle move from stewards to governors - most unhelpfully but resonantly rendered in the Authorised Version text as an instruction to “subdue [the earth] and have dominion over ... every living thing” (*Genesis 1.28*). Misunderstanding the notion of “dominion”, and distorting the proper role of a steward has at times led the Church to be complicit with an arrogant exploitation of the earth’s resources and a disregard for the welfare of our fellow creatures. As our knowledge has grown, so we have come to see that some of our past certainties about the world were flawed, and so we are recalled to a sense of **humility**, acknowledging the limits of our insight into the mystery of our existence.

The role of steward, with its sense of the special **responsibilities** which come with knowledge and power, is a valuable one, but we are creatures first of all - part of a balanced pattern of creation - and only later are we made stewards too.

The second chapter of Genesis shows Adam initially in a relationship of **companionship** with the animal world, in the setting of harmony in an abundantly fruitful garden; and even in the sacrificial cult of the Hebrew people inside and outside the Temple, **relationship** with slaughtered animals is stressed: the act of sacrifice is powerful precisely because it is the life of one of God’s creatures offered. The miracles of Jesus, too, speak of abundance within the **natural order** - drafts of fishes and food for thousands - and the fishermen of Galilee live in close relationship with the forces of nature, which Christ commands but does not overturn. A world where natural stocks of basic resources are seriously depleted is clearly out of kilter with the standards of the promised kingdom, and we cannot justly expect God to intervene, simply to reverse the effects of our sustained and impenitent greed.

Care for the earth is founded upon **relationship**:

- **a relationship between Creator and created**, founded upon dignity with humility, and a gratitude which counts every created thing precious, with an innate value, not to be squandered
- **a relationship between any one created being and any other**, which acknowledges that human power, ability and knowledge brings responsibilities of restraint, service and integrity. To be made “in the image of God” is not foremost a gift of power - God’s exercise of power is self-sacrificial - but a gift of compassion and love in community.
- **a relationship in community**, experienced throughout the human family. We can already see how the effects of ill-judged environmental behaviour are often born first and most severely by the poorest communities, often paying the price for others actions. Seeking a sustainable future is part of a Christian commitment to a fairer and more equitable world.
- **a relationship within the whole created order**. Genesis 1 sets humanity within a balanced and orchestrated order resonant with goodness, and texts such as the closing chapters of Job, Psalm 148 and the Song of the Three Young Men (the *Benedicite* of matins) see the harmonious interplay of cosmic forces, the elements and living creatures as the fullest expression of the praises of God.
- **a relationship with the material world** in which the Word was made flesh, hallowing our physicality.

It is this **relatedness with the whole of creation under God**, which forms the bedrock upon which the specifics of this strategy have been prepared. It comes from a conviction that working to restore the fractured integrity of creation is an integral part of seeking reconciliation between God the Creator and Humankind, his creation. That reconciliation is, of course, God’s initiative and gift to us in the death and resurrection of the Son, but full acceptance of that saving gift is intimately bound up with our relationship with the creation of which we are but a part. God’s saving purpose is not just for the individual, but for the whole creation, labouring and groaning towards the fulfilment of his promise.

Liturgy

Our worship, whether in church or small groups or privately, has to be at the heart of any exploration of our relatedness with the whole of creation under God and our search for reconciliation.

Some churches may benefit from setting aside one Sunday a year as an Environment Sunday, an idea being promoted nationally. In addition, the Common Worship Lectionary made a conscious decision to introduce Creation themes on the Second Sunday before Lent in each of the three years (in a departure from the Revised Common Lectionary), and the collects for the day reflect this. This can be a useful way to establish an agenda, reflect theologically and raise awareness in local congregations; however, it remains important that we don't stop at a once a year event which could make environmental awareness and commitment feel like another interest for good people to support, but not something incarnated into all our decision making nor an essential part of our discipleship. Many rural churches follow the rhythms of Rogation, Lammas, Plough Sunday and Harvest and they can have a place in the urban context too. Harvest is widely celebrated and can be used to reflect local trades and occupations, our connectedness to the earth and its resources, and also have an international dimension. The suggestions below are simple steps that could reflect Christian concern for the integrity of creation.

Theme	Theology & Liturgy: exploring our relationship with creation under God in our reflection and worship	Who	Timescale
	PCCs and housegroups to reflect theologically on the impacts, on people and all creation, of climate change and environmental degradation at local and international level.	PCCs, housegroups	Within 18 months and at suitable intervals.
	Engage with local environmental movements, such as Transition Towns, and ensure theological thinking has a hearing within their reflections on the need for change.	church members	ongoing
	Many liturgy resources already exist. The ECO Group to make these known.	ECO Group	2010
	Clergy and other ministers are encouraged to focus worship and preaching on creation themes when the lectionary readings are appropriate. Christian Ecology Link provides Green Pointers for Preachers linked to the lectionary http://www.christian-ecology.org.uk/econotes.htm#current	Ministers	regularly
	Find ways of embedding environmental concern into regular liturgical practice in a way that will carry meaning locally. Examples for consideration might include: ensuring the meaning and significance of offering of bread and wine includes the celebration of God's providence in creation; presenting other symbols as an offering (the Church in South India presents a basket of fruit and flowers and/or an arrangement of petals in a circle representing the earth)	PCCs and ministers	within 18 months

3.8 COMMUNICATION AND EDUCATION

Church of England congregations nationally contribute around 3 million tonnes of carbon each year. If they were to change their habits that would be a good start. We should remember we're not alone here. Within our churches are employers and employees who are tackling the same environmental challenges this strategy seeks to address; children who are being taught the problems and possible solutions.

We need to mobilise this resource and make sure there are accessible, practical and relevant ways of communicating with and learning from all of these people.

Theme	Communication & Education: Informing practical steps for parishes and people		
Objective	Communicating To establish clear and effective communication channels with all audiences, to ensure the strategy goal is achieved.	Who	Timescale
Issue press releases to the local media highlighting initiatives taking place in the diocese and in parishes and regular coverage in the Diocesan News and diocesan emailing.		Communications Officer	regularly
Create a dedicated area on the diocesan website with hints and tips for individuals and parishes which will incorporate what already appears (information about the Good Energy affiliation scheme and links to useful websites. The site to provide opportunities for parishes to input their own information and ask questions.		Communications Officer aided by ECOgroup and SR office.	mid 2010 and then regularly updated
Run training days for clergy on environmental issues		Director of Development	2010-2011
Regular training and advice for churchwardens		Archdeacons	2010 onward
Training for DAC members and Church Architects		DAC secretary	2010 onward
Training for diocesan staff		Old Palace Environment Group	annually
Produce DVD for use in parishes to promote strategy and give tips and examples of what can be done		Communications Officer and ECOgroup	2010
Churches to introduce changing displays of information/material on environmental issues and involve children and young people in changing/maintaining the displays.		PCCs	2010-2012
Carry out an environmental audit or work through modules from EcoCongregations and encourage church members to carry out similar audits for their homes and their travel		PCCs	2010-2012
Encourage all church schools to gain EcoSchools/Green Flag accreditation and ensure church members know what is being achieved through schools		Dept of Children, Youth and Education	2010-2012

Examples of what can be done

The whole of RedHill school community takes responsibility for looking after creation and thinking about the future of our world. Environmental issues are relevant to many religions, eco activities can be truly inclusive and cohesive.

RedHill has made a firm commitment to the sustainability agenda. The new building boasts many environmentally friendly features including, a green roof, toilets flushed by rainwater, a sustainable urban drainage system and geo thermal heating. The building and developed grounds are fully utilised as a focus and vehicle for environmental education and sustainability projects.

It is the ongoing involvement of the whole school community in environmental and sustainability projects that we are most proud of. Our garden is flourishing with a pupil led gardening club growing flowers for all to see and cultivating and growing vegetables that are sold to staff and parents. Particular successes this year have been radish and lettuce. Fruit is picked from our trees by the pupils and raspberries from the canes planted before. The chicken club is thriving. Our caretaker runs the club for pupils of all ages. They take full responsibility for the care of the chickens and the egg collection and distribution. We have recently added a small number of ducks to the grounds, the opportunity has been taken by many to observe their habits and growth.

We have recently leased an additional woodland area adjacent to the school for specific use as an outdoor learning and forest school activity area. The pupils will be developing the area and using it on a weekly basis. Our learning for sustainability is present in curricula and non curricula activities, it spans the age range.

Recently our nursery have been involved in learning about themselves and the world around them. Part of their work has been to plant small trees that they can watch grow throughout their time with us. All staff and Governors had further CPD training about sustainable schools sept 09 and identified the next steps on our journey.

Our new Learning platform has an area dedicated to sustainability issues, it also has an eco schools page that is maintained by the children. Our 3 eco clubs that cover different phases are spearheaded for decision making by a representative school council. All are delighted to have just gained our Green Flag Award.

Text and photos supplied by RedHill School



3.9 MEASURING OUR PROGRESS

Finally, in order to manage this we have to measure our progress. We need simple tools and simple indicators that will help us chart our progress, both short term and long term..

The archbishops and bishops of the Church of England expect all dioceses to have established systems for measuring and reporting annually on carbon footprints (*Church and Earth 2009-2016: The Church of England's Seven Year Plan on Climate Change and the Environment*). The expectation is that the central church *Shrinking the Footprint* team will prepare guidelines "by 2012, with a view to adoption by all dioceses and parishes by the end of 2016, to refine methodology for gathering and calculating use and emissions data, to encourage consistent good practice in local information gathering. ... Officers in all parishes should make annual reports of energy use and carbon emissions to PCCs and their dioceses".

In Diocese of Worcester the following steps are to be taken without waiting for the national guidelines:

- PCCs should have someone to report at least annually on energy consumption and to take frequent and regular meter readings. This is already done in the diocesan offices and some parishes. Similar arrangements should be put in place for parsonage houses and bishops' houses.
- At the time of the Archdeacons' Visitations and starting in 2010, parishes will be asked to complete a simple questionnaire about energy use and the any steps taken to reduce green house gas emissions.

Further consideration will be given to:

- (1) finding ways in which churches and church bodies can monitor and reduce transport associated emissions;
- (2) establishing benchmarks to enable churches to compare the performance of their buildings with others.

Achievements

The Environmental Challenge & Oversight Group would be glad to be kept up to date on examples of good practice and to hear from PCCs about steps they have taken.

4.0 HOW TO GET STARTED

Many churches have started with a small group of concerned people keen to take the environmental agenda forward. It's best if the group is recognised or appointed by the Parochial Church Council.

The basic start up steps for a group or PCC are:

- Take stock of the current situation
- Make plans for change
- Give priority to inexpensive energy saving measures

The diocesan website and this strategy document include some suggested actions for PCCs to consider. There is also a list of recommended sources of information to help you get started on the following page.

A key source to help churches get started is the Church of England's national environmental campaign "Shrinking the Footprint" <http://www.shrinkingthefootprint.cofe.anglican.org/>

The following recommendation for getting started came from Fladbury, a village church in this diocese:

Appoint a small group to -

- complete an environmental check of where the church stands at present
- make a list of changes to be made to be more sustainable, both in church and in personal lifestyle, starting with some more easily attainable goals, and progressing to more complex changes
- arrange meetings to share experiences and suggestions for improvement – and some fun targets for young and old
- provide notices and check lists both in the church and for personal use at home
- give opportunities for people to learn more about the affects of climate change further afield and continuing ways of helping people, both here and abroad, to overcome the problems they are causing and experiencing



Eco-Congregation: an ecumenical programme helping churches make the link between environmental issues and Christian faith, and respond in practical action in the church, in the lives of individuals, and in the local and global community. Helps get you started with an audit on all the main issues. www.ecocongregation.org



Eco-Schools: an international award programme that guides schools on their sustainable journey, providing a framework to help embed these principles into the heart of school life. www.eco-schools.org.uk



Christian Ecology Link: Offers insights into ecology and the environment to Christian people and churches. Offers Christian insights to the Green movement. Excellent prayer guide and reflections resources. www.christian-ecology.org.uk



Shrinking the Footprint: The Church of England's National Environmental Campaign, includes simple steps to reduce consumption of non-renewable resources. www.shrinkingthefootprint.cofe.anglican.org



The Energy Saving Trust: a non-profit organisation, funded by government and the private sector, to achieve the sustainable use of energy, cut carbon dioxide emissions and promote the use of small-scale renewable energy sources. It offers a range of practical advice and support for households, business and the public sector (e.g. schools). www.energysavingtrust.org.uk



Stewarding the Earth's Resources: A resource for the church about sustainable waste management. www.earthresources.org.uk



Fairtrade is about better prices, decent working conditions, local sustainability, and fair terms of trade for farmers and workers in the developing world. Fairtrade addresses the injustices of conventional trade, which traditionally discriminates against the poorest, weakest producers. www.fairtrade.org.uk